[Translation]

New NHs in Ninth Plan

725. SHRIMATI PURNIMA VERMA :
SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme under the Ninth Five Year Plan for the development and maintenance of the existing National Highways and construction of the new National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount earmarked for this purpose under the Ninth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (c) The Ninth Plan is yet to be finalised and, therefore, it is too early to give details.

[English]

Gas Grid

726. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to set up Gas Grid in Northern region particularly in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Girl Education

727. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "School bhi nahin dekh pati adhi se jyada ladkian" appearing in 'Jansatta' dated May 6, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard and to increase the rate of literacy amongst girls which is very low in some States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is a fact that female literacy rate in some States mentioned in the news-item is very low. A variety of factors have been found to be responsible for poor female literacy rate. Low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention rate and high drop-out rate alongwith several other socio-economic reasons are responsible for poor female literacy rate in these areas. Several Schemes to provide Universalisation of Elementary Education, including Non-Formal Education for School drop outs and Total Literacy Campaigns of the National Literacy Mission from the main strategies for increasing female literacy in the country. Under the Non-Formal Education Programme, the Central Government provides assistance to the States in the ratio of 90:10 for running centres exclusively for girls as against boys/co-educational centres which are provided financial assistance in the ratio of 60:40.

Indo-Bangla Water Agreement

728. SHRI SIBU SOREN :
SHRI SURESH PRABHU :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether more water has been given to Bangladesh consequent upon the Indo-Bangla water agreement signed recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether due to this sharing of water, the level of water in Calcutta port has come down to a great extent; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and remedial measures proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Water was given to Bangladesh as stipulated in the Indo-Bangladesh Water Agreement signed on 12th December, 1996.

(c) and (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.